

Economies of Pride and Shame: Politics of Affect in New Narratives about Sweden Finns

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*This chapter examines the contemporary revisiting and reimagining of the histories and memories of Finnish migrants in Sweden. Since 2000, a new generation of children and grandchildren of the Great Migration in the 1960s and 1970s has entered the public arena in Sweden, articulating new narratives in pop music, literature, theatre and film. While these “third-generation” Sweden Finnish artists themselves embody success stories of migration, enjoying positive publicity and the appreciation of Swedish mainstream audiences, it is argued that the new narratives are essentially stories about living with, managing and rejecting shame. To be either a cultural producer or an audience of new narratives about Sweden Finns is to engage with an affective legacy of shame, a sense of history and a repertoire of representations – and politics of pride as its rejoinder. Drawing from affect theories by Sara Ahmed and Margaret Wetherell, as well as Beverley Skeggs’ work on the production of class, this chapter investigates two novels, *Svinalångorna* by Susanna Alakoski (2006) and *Ingenbarnsland* by Eija Hetekivi Olsson (2012); two television programmes, *Emigranterna* SVT (2006–2007) and *Kansankodin kuokkavieraat* YLE Teema (2011); and a musical documentary, *Ingen riktig finne/Laulu koti-ikävästä* (Mika Ronkainen 2013). In this way, the study highlights an affective practice, a pattern in process and an economy of pride and shame mobilized for purposes of identity construction and community building.*

Introduction

In October 2014, Sisuradio, the Finnish section of Swedish Public Radio (Sveriges Radio), organized a campaign week on social media around the hashtag #vågafinska – that is, #havethecouragetospeakfinnish. As a case of both media marketing and contemporary “hashtag politics” (Jeffares 2014) to create public opinion in social media, the campaign was designed to promote Finnish language use in Sweden and to empower Swedes with Finnish roots to come out and make themselves visible as members of the Sweden Finnish minority, as well as to create

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positive publicity for the minority radio channel itself. The campaign was deemed successful in terms of audience response: hundreds of listeners shared their stories on Facebook, and thousands commented on Twitter (#vågafinska 2014). The campaign was also widely acknowledged in other media, and eventually it was nominated for “Radio Event of the Year” in Sweden.

As a gesture of minority politics, the campaign was about identity and recognition rather than rights. After having long been the prime cultural marker providing unity within the Sweden Finnish community and offering a means of advancing political agendas, the Finnish language is no longer a self-evident *raison d'être* for the community. The Sweden Finnish minority is estimated to number up to 720,000 persons, about 7.2% of the population in 2016 and Finns until 2017 the largest immigrant group in Sweden (Vuonokari, Laitinen & Karlsson 2017; Rogberg 2017). However, the contours and identity of the cultural minority are fluid.¹ For a long time Finnish was the second most spoken language in Sweden, but it is currently being overtaken by Arabic (Parkvall 2015). Furthermore, Sweden Finns were established as an official minority only in 1999 when Sweden ratified the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. And after decades of assimilationist language policies, Finnish was only recognized as one of five official language minorities in 2010.

During the past ten years, some 40 years after the peak years of the Great Migration (1969–1970) when up to 40,000 Finnish migrants were moving annually to Sweden, the children and grandchildren of that generation have started to investigate their complex identities, interrogating national legacies and the intricacies of cultural differences. In 2012, the Archive of the Sweden Finns (Sverigefinländarnas arkiv) organized the exhibition *Arvet* (“Heritage”) “about a new generation”, that is, the second- and third-generation Sweden Finns, which it claimed to be “nearly half a million” (Vuonokari 2012).

Since the turn of millennium, a number of musicians with Finnish heritage have become household names in the Swedish mainstream media: Kent, Laakso, Markoolio, Anna Järvinen, Markus Krunegård, Frida Hyvönen, Lisa Miskovsky and

1 In the postwar era, the scale of the Finnish emigration to Sweden was exceptional: with 10% of the population migrating, the phenomenon was the largest since World War II Europe in relation to the size of the population (Reinans 1996). Between 1945 and 1994, 700,000–800,000 Finns moved to Sweden for shorter or longer periods, with some moving back and forth several times and many returning to Finland. In 2008, 450,000 inhabitants in Sweden were either born in Finland, had Finnish citizenship or had at least one Finnish parent. In addition, there were 240,000 inhabitants whose grandparents were Finnish. (Korkiasaari 2000, 156; Björklund 2009.) According to recent statistics, first-, second- and third-generation Sweden Finns number up to 719,000 (Vuonokari, Laitinen & Karlsson 2017). Sweden has no official statistics of languages spoken, but in 2016, 23.2% of inhabitants were born or their both parents were born abroad. SCB 2017 “Befolkningsstatistik i sammandrag 1960–2016” <http://www.scb.se/hitta-statistik/statistik-efter-amne/befolkning/befolkningens-sammansattning/befolkningsstatistik/pong/tabell-och-diagram/helarsstatistik--riket/befolkningsstatistik-i-sammandrag/> (visited 2 June 2017). According to fresh statistics, Syrians are today the biggest foreign-born nationality group (Rogberg 2017).

Timo Räisänen came out first, followed most recently by Miriam Bryant. The feature films *Om Gud vill* (*God Willing*, Amir Chamdin 2006), *Kid svensk* (*That Special Summer*, Nanna Huolman 2000) and *Svinalängorna* (*Beyond*, Pernilla August 2010), as well as theatre performances such as Tanja Lorentzon's monologue *Mormors svarta ögon* ("Grandmother's Dark Eyes", Dramaten 2010) and Anna Takanen's direction of Lucas Svensson's epic *Fosterlandet* ("Fatherland", Gothenburg and Stockholm City Theatres 2015–2016), have investigated and interrogated the Finnish roots of second- and third-generation immigrants. Furthermore, subcultural scenes have emerged both in the Stockholm area and in Gothenburg with clubs and festivals, tango evenings (Tangopalatsi), cultural events, projects, websites and a new magazine (*Sheriffi*), all reclaiming and rehabilitating Finnish legacies. While subcultural activities are by definition marginal, Susanna Alakoski's 2006 novel *Svinalängorna* ("The Council Houses") about Finnish immigrants in south Sweden has sold almost half a million copies, and it was awarded the prestigious August prize. Its cinematic adaptation by director Pernilla August (with the English title *Beyond*) was Sweden's official candidate for the Foreign Language Oscar, and it was also nominated for the Nordic Council Film Prize, Scandinavia's largest film award. In 2012, Eija Hetekivi Olsson's novel *Ingenbarnsland* ("No Child's Land") was awarded a debut novel prize by The Swedish Writers' Union.

This is the new, heterogeneous and vibrant cultural context that the public service minority radio Sisuradio attempted to address with its #vågafinska campaign. While foregrounding empowering positivity and inviting its audience to participate in reclaiming the Finnish language, however, the campaign also mobilized memories and awareness of Finnish language as a site of shame. As such, the campaign mobilized an economy of shame and pride that echoes the familiar affective dynamic of GLTBQI movements – the alternation between a repelling of shame and a declaration of self-pride (see Fortier 2005, 565) – that, as I argue in this paper, characterizes the new narratives about Sweden Finns more generally.² Furthermore, it serves as an illustrative case of "affective citizenship" – the importance of emotions in the construction of citizenship (Johnson 2010) – and, more specifically, cultural citizenship as an affective practice.

In the following, after presenting the theoretical framework for this approach, I move on to discuss three cases of pride/shame economy: first, Sweden Finnish literary texts making claims for cultural visibility; secondly, Swedish and Finnish public service television series representing Sweden Finns for both minority and mainstream audiences; and thirdly, a recent Swedish-Finnish co-produced feature documentary reflecting upon the representational legacies. Through these three different cases, I wish to illustrate how the economy of pride and shame operates as an affective dynamic across different media and is not identifiable

² Interestingly, shame is not a topic discussed in the existing literature on Sweden Finns (Hormia 1979; Jaakkola 1984; Lainio 1996; Korkiasaari & Tarkiainen 2000; Junila & Westin 2006; Levä 2008; Tapiola 2011). The one exception is Tiina Rosenberg's essay on class, cleaning and cleanliness in Alakoski & Nielsen 2006.

with any particular media or media genre. The case studies are not chosen as representative of all Sweden Finnish cultural production, but as high-profile, widely circulated narratives about Sweden Finns that not only speak to Sweden Finns but are directed at mainstream audiences. The analysis aims to highlight the complexity of the pride/shame dynamic while demonstrating its productivity for identity and community-building purposes.

Patterns in Process: Affects as Resource

In the words of the social psychologist Margaret Wetherell, affective practice “focuses on the emotional as it appears in social life and tries to follow what participants do” (Wetherell 2012, 159). In her analysis, affective practices are “patterns in process” (ibid., 23) as “‘canonical emotional styles’ and distinctive ‘affective repertoires’ emerge in bodies, in minds, in individual lives, in relationships, in communities, across generations, and in social formations” (Wetherell 2015, 147). Drawing from her approach, I read the dynamic of pride and shame manifested in narratives about Sweden Finns as an affective practice. It is “a pattern in process” which encompasses, on the one hand, desires to destigmatize and eliminate personal and social shame, propelling a whole spectrum of demands of “liberation, legitimacy, dignity, acceptance, and assimilation, as well as the right to be different” (Halperin & Traub 2009, 3). On the other hand, it entails self-affirmation and mobilization of pride.

Traditionally, shame has been conceptualized as a negative emotion: a psychological state of suffering and anxiety to be individually or collectively worked through and liberated from. In recent critical queer theorization of shame, however, it is considered more than “a negative emotion” or a “backward feeling” (Love 2009). According to Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, “The forms taken by shame are not distinct ‘toxic’ parts of a group or individual identity that can be erased; they are instead integral to and residual in the process by which identity itself is formed” (Sedgwick 2003, 63). Highlighting the performativity of shame, its potential as a critical resource and a site of sociality, Sedgwick conceptualized shame simultaneously as a foundational, identity-forming affective experience and as a transformational, anti-identitarian energy resulting in “the work of metamorphosis, reframing, refiguration, transfiguration, affective and symbolic loading and deformation” (ibid., 13). Sedgwick’s performative theory of shame shifted the critical attention to the productivity and versatility of shame. It also reframed the affective economy of shame and pride, importantly unlocking these two from a causal chain. As a consequence, shame was redefined as not merely signalling a social trauma but as offering “a refuge, a site of solidarity and belonging”, as David Halperin and Valerie Straub argue (2009, 9). According to Michael Warner (1999, 35–36), shame invokes “a special kind of sociability” among those acknowledging

and building communities around what is most abject about themselves, and it propels “collectivities of the shamed” (Crimp 2009, 72).

Indeed, to be a cultural producer or audience of narratives about Sweden Finns, I propose, is to engage with an affective legacy of shame, a sense of history and a repertoire of representations – and politics of pride as its given rejoinder. To respond with feeling to these representations, be they literary, cinematic or theatrical, is not necessarily about identification with particular characters, storylines, themes and issues. Rather, it is about feeling the intensity of these narratives, sensing their accumulation of cultural and historical force. Affective address is understood here as the “weight of images” against the viewer (Kyrölä 2010); as a force not in spite of but because of temporal layers and citational legacies mobilized by images, the historicity of representations pulls viewers towards them, cuing anticipation, propelling narrative and interpretive desires (Koivunen 2012a). This argument of repetition as historicity draws from a reading of Judith Butler’s early work on performative acts working through “the accumulating and dissimulating historicity of force” (Butler 1993, 226–227, Koivunen 2003).

Instead of postulating shame as a core of Sweden Finnish identity – thinking about shame as a property or quality of certain selves or bodies, or even an ethnic, cultural group – I read the narratives about shame and the dynamic of pride and shame as circulation of affect, an affective economy. In calling the dynamic of pride and shame an economy, I draw from Sara Ahmed, who uses the notion of economy to conceptualize emotion as movement and circulation. In her approach, emotions “do not positively reside in a subject or figure” but “still work to bind subjects together”, working “as a form of capital” and being produced “only as an effect of its circulation” (Ahmed 2004b, 120). Hence, the notion of economy highlights the productivity and performativity of emotion: “Emotions *do things*, and they align individuals with communities – or bodily space with social space – through the very intensity of their attachments” (Ahmed 2004b, 119). Such an approach highlights the relationality of emotions and affects as well as their temporality and historicity:

Affect does not reside in an object or sign, but is an affect of the circulation between objects and signs (= the accumulation of affective value over time). Some signs, that is, increase in affective value as an effect of the movement between signs: the more they circulate, the more affective they become, and the more they appear to “contain” affect. (Ahmed 2004b, 120)

Movement as an increase or decrease of affect and value in Ahmed’s approach echoes how Beverley Skeggs in *Class, Self, Culture* (2004) theorizes the work of representation as symbolic evaluation whereby representations “attribute value to different people, practices, objects and classifications” (Skeggs 2004, 96). Analysing the attribution of value, Skeggs discusses representations as the site “where symbolic violence occurs”: where “differentiation is made between culture worth having and knowing, and culture that is not” (Skeggs 1997, 95; 2004, 96). In her work, Skeggs offers a theory of class formation, highlighting how class is “not just a

representation, nor a subject position which can be taken off a discursive shelf and worn at will or a social position which can be occupied voluntarily” (Skeggs 1997, 94). Her approach is heuristic for my reading of the narratives about Sweden Finns, which in my analysis are essentially narratives about class: invoking, articulating and negotiating classed representations and “the denigration and delegitimizing associated with their class positioning” (Skeggs 1997, 95). It also offers important insights for understanding why both old and new narratives about Sweden Finns seem caught in – but also derive their affective force from – an economy of pride and shame.

The Hidden Injury of Class: *Svinalängorna* and *Ingenbarnsland*

In her study of the emerging Sweden Finnish literary field of the 1970s, Marja-Liisa Pynnönen (1991, 235) describes the portrayals of immigrant reality as a combination of self-therapy and social protest: “a thoroughly experiential material” features an abundance of descriptions of “the desolate situation of the non-Swedish-speaking children in school”, of “being a maladjusted alien” and of “the feeling of being pushed aside”. Alienation, maladjustment and marginalization are concepts that Pynnönen, like many other scholars writing about Sweden Finns, use to interpret how the minority has described itself. Discussing 1970s and 1980s novels by Hannu Ylitalo and Antti Jalava in particular, Erkki Vallenius (1998, 108) writes about a “hegemony of shame” as an overarching topic in narratives of immigration.

Here the self-representation of Swedish Finns echoed imagery prevalent in mainstream Swedish media, where the trope of scandal often framed portraits of the Great Migration. Coverage of crime and social problems resulted in negative stereotypes: Swedish Finns were addressed and portrayed as disadvantaged citizens in need of social resources. The representations emphasized problems and called for reform policies. In this publicity, being a Finnish immigrant in Sweden equalled being underclass. In a headline in 1967, the Swedish tabloid *Expressen* asked, “Is it ugly to be a Finn?” Another tabloid, *Aftonbladet*, offered a telling rubric, “Work hard and keep your mouth shut. You are a fucking Finn anyway.”³

In her 1984 study of newly immigrated Sweden Finns, Magdalena Jaakkola described their condition as a “fall of ethnic status” (Jaakkola 1983, 39), referring to how Finns moving to Sweden also shift from a majority identity to a minority one. In the new context, both Finnish language and nationality became visible as a social stigma, entailing a fall of social status. Significantly, as Jaakkola points out, 7 out of 10 Sweden Finns in 1979 were working class – a ratio quite distinct from the whole population, one third, in both Finland and Sweden.

3 “Är det fult att vara finne?”, *Expressen*, 29 October, 1967; “Arbeta hårt och knip käft. Du är ändå finnjävel”, *Aftonbladet*, 5 December, 1970.

As Beverley Skeggs argues, categorizations of class are permeated by affects – fear, anxiety, and disgust – and she turns to Pierre Bourdieu to theorize how “affect and culture shape how class relations are made, known, and lived in social encounters” (Skeggs 2012, 270). In Skeggs’ reading, Bourdieu’s notion of capital is useful for conceptualizing how “people can move through social space” (Skeggs 2012, 270): “Class is shaped by access to different capitals which over time become literally embodied, that is lived as bodily dispositions” (ibid.). In her analysis, affective responses – such as shame – are symptomatic of how class is lived as a structure of feeling (Skeggs 1997, 94–95).

These affective legacies of shame are mobilized by Susanna Alakoski and Eija Hetekivi Olsson, both of whom in their debut novels write about Finnish immigrant children or youth in Sweden. Both novels are read as autobiographical and therefore as witness accounts of Sweden Finnish life, making visible a forgotten minority and claiming space for its existence in Swedish social memory. Both acquired public applause and appreciation in Sweden: Alakoski won an August prize and Hetekivi Olsson was shortlisted for it, while also winning the Swedish Radio Novel Prize and a debut novel prize by The Swedish Writers’ Union. Generally speaking, the two novels are very different: *Svinalängorna* is a portrayal of social misery, neglect and abuse in 1970s Southern Sweden; it invokes a range of genres, from naturalist novels to social problem narrative and reportage literature. *Ingenbarnsland*, on the other hand, tells the story of Miira, whose parents are tidy and orderly Finnish working-class immigrants seeking to raise their daughter in Gothenburg, on the Swedish West Coast, in Finnish-language classes. Miira’s rebellious first-person narration bears more resemblance to Monica Fagerholm’s female protagonists or 1990s Swedish girl films (Mulari 2015).

Svinalängorna and *Ingenbarnsland* underline the investments of their protagonists and first-person narrators in their Swedish communities, regularly making a spectacle of their failures in this regard. Both of the child-narrators monitor Swedish kids, make constant comparisons to themselves and articulate a sense of being a second-class citizen. Shame here is about the gaze of others. In an early scene in *Svinalängorna*, the mother and the children investigate their new home, a flat in a newly built council house, admiring the amenities of a well-equipped kitchen with a fridge, oven and many cupboards, warm water, bathroom with a bathtub and indoor toilet, balcony, and easy-care plastic mats in the living room. This enjoyment of welfare luxury is contrasted with the following scene, where the young Leena overhears her mother expressing anger at how their family is addressed by social workers as needing information about proper rules of behaviour. According to Leena’s mother, only the Finns in the neighbourhood were required to give a vow of temperance: “we were treated as second-class citizens or something, even though she had never met us before” (“vi blev ju behandlade som att vi var andra klassens människor eller något, fast hon aldrig hade sett oss förut”).

In both novels, language emerges as the prime marker of class, and also the primary site of shame. (See also Pynnönen 1991, 209–213.) The first pages

of *Svinlångorna* feature swearing as a marker of Finnishness, as well as transliterations of difficulties in the pronunciation of Swedish words (“Suttio vem okk och alv kvatrat meter. Vi har ree rum och sök och ett stort haav allteles runtomkring hornet.” Alakoski 2006, 12). Leena, the first-person narrator, collects and makes lists of Swedish words, with the lists becoming a visible sign of her simultaneous exclusion and her desire to be included. In *Ingenbarnsland*, the protagonist Miira describes her condition as being imprisoned in a *finneballebubblan*, or “minority bubble” (Hetekivi Olsson 2012, 197). Attending classes taught in Finnish, an opportunity given by the Swedish school system as a gesture of recognizing minority languages amidst assimilationist immigration policies, Miira experiences being downgraded and doomed to become a second-class citizen, even a cleaning lady (“Sirkka Städarelainen”); she asks how she could ever study to become a brain surgeon, given that she will not even learn the names of brain parts in Swedish.

While readable as “authentic” claims for cultural visibility (see Skeggs 2004, 105–107) and hence as involved in pride politics through self-affirmation and a demand for recognition, both novels are essentially narratives about the pain of shame. As Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick and Adam Frank (2003, 116) write in their evocation of Silvan Tomkins’ affect theory, shame as an emotion is always linked to a positive expectation: “only a scene that offers you enjoyment or engages your interest can make you blush”. This, indeed, is the affective economy of Sweden Finns as a collectivity of the shamed. Both Leena and Miira aspire to belong and pass as Swedes, but are painfully shamed by their failure or exclusion. Through the eyes of others they internalize the shaming gaze of others, directing it not only at themselves (most explicitly, Miira in *Ingenbarnsland*) but also at their parents (especially Leena in *Svinlångorna*). At the same time, as Sara Ahmed (2004a, 107) argues, shame is intimately related to interest and love and, hence, the formation of communities: “Shame binds us to others in how we are affected by our failure to ‘live up’ those others, a failure that must be witnessed.” She concludes that “shame both confirms and negates the love that sticks us together” (Ahmed 2004a, 107). For the Swedish audience, these novels may read as social critique or shaming narratives of the failures of the *folkhem*, the Swedish welfare state, in integrating migrants or managing class differences beyond Sweden Finns. For Sweden Finns, the narratives may read as a painful repetition of individual and collective experiences of shame, but also as signals of efforts to recuperate shame and seek recognition. In any case, shame builds communities.

Representing Minority, Attributing Value: Public Service TV in Sweden and Finland

The recent radio campaign #vågafinska is but one instance in a series of programmes by Swedish public service television and radio encouraging Sweden Finns to discover and investigate their Finnish legacies, sometimes ironically

and tongue-in-cheek, sometimes in a more didactic manner. Unearthing hidden Finnishness, reclaiming it as an asset and an interesting life story, is what many of the recent Sweden Finnish TV series (*Juuret/Rötter* 1–7, 2012; *Love i Finland* 1–5, 2015; *Finnomani* 1–6, 2016) are suggesting.

While negative stereotypical images of Finnish immigrants as male, uneducated and alcoholic still circulate in the public sphere, in public television minority media (Tapiola 2011; Lainio 1996, 416–418; Korkiasaari 2000, 328–331) Sweden Finns are most often addressed and portrayed as resourceful, mobile citizens.⁴ Symptomatic of this approach is the documentary series *Emigranterna* (“Emigrants” 1–11, SVT 2006–2007), in which portraits of Finns moving to Sweden intertwine with stories of Swedes moving to Finland, all of them being presented as a pool of migration stories. Already in its title, *Emigranterna* distinguishes itself from the figure of the immigrant. While “immigration” connotes migration as movement out of necessity, “emigration” here stresses mobility as a self-made choice.⁵ “Emigrants” are adventurous, self-enterprising and resourceful persons who make active choices – in contrast to “immigrants”, who are, by implication, framed by discourses of necessity, disadvantage and victimhood. In the words of SVT promotional publicity:

Emigrants are courageous people who want changes in their lives. Before moving they sell their houses and furniture, give up flats and jobs, and orient themselves towards the new life with adventurous minds. Family and friends, or at least many memories, are left in the past home country – in the new one awaits the unknown. Be the mover a Finn or a Swede, migration is always a confusing experience. The bureaucratic labyrinths, trials with language skills and the loneliness awaiting an emigrant will eventually turn into a victory. Or is this the case?⁶

In *Emigranterna*, we meet Marjo Kulojärvi and Jari Tenhunen, who leave their newly built house in Haukipudas when Jari is offered an engineering job in Stockholm, and Laura Tuominen and Markus Ala, two information technology professionals and a thirtysomething couple from Tampere who move to their company's Stockholm office. On the other hand, the series features Daniel Svensson, who has dual citizenship and is seeking a military career in Finland, aspiring for A-class status as a soldier; Anne and Markku Kotisalo, who have worked for Nokia and the banking sector in Stockholm and are now returning to Finland because of their son; and Miriam Olsson, who moves from Gothenburg to the Turku archipelago

4 Committed to promoting Swedish language and constructing an impartial platform for the formation of public opinion, SVT is simultaneously obliged by its remit to prioritize “taking into consideration the interests of linguistic and ethnic minorities”. In this manner, public service television in Sweden has a dual agenda: to appeal to the broad public and gain popular legitimacy and, at the same time, to provide a frame and means for minority activism. (Camauër 2003.)

5 For a discussion of the concepts of migration and mobility, see Habti & Koikkalainen 2014, 7.

6 Presentation of *Emigrantit/Emigranterna*. SVT 21 April 2006. <svt.se/2.39159/1.577830/> (visited 22 February 2011, not available online anymore). (This and other translations from Swedish and Finnish by the author.)

to learn Finnish and experience small island village life. Importantly, the series depicts Swedish Finns and indigenous Swedes as symmetrically positioned. It calls forth identification by mirroring the migration between the two countries. Here the historical class difference is downplayed and replaced by a rhetoric of cultural difference and emphasis on language skills.

The framing of Sweden Finns and migrants in general as “courageous” agents of their own lives is enhanced by the use of video diaries, in which the protagonists “reveal” the truth about their experiences of migration. These video diaries frame the representatives of the category of “emigrants” as narrators and subjects of their own lives, as having a voice of their own and as being able to control it. Shame, by implication, is redistributed to those unnamed bodies not living up to this ideal of mobile life, who do not empower themselves (Ouellette & Hay 2008, 3, 15), but perhaps, through silence, also to those past generations of migrants who supposedly acted out of necessity and not out of free will.

Kansankodin kuokkavieraat (“The Gate-crashers in the Folkhem” 1–8, YLE Teema 2011), a Finnish documentary series about Sweden Finns, has a very different rhetoric than *Emigranterna*. In its very title, it addresses migrants as “gate-crashers” and, hence, as uninvited guests or intruders. Furthermore, it opens by remembering and documenting the poverty of 1960s Finland, citing footage from a 1969 TV documentary about Finnish migrants. With this footage and witness statements, the series frames the mass migration as an issue of necessity, depicting Finland during that period in terms of poverty, hunger, unemployment, housing issues and deficient infrastructure:

Half a million Finns in the prime years, 10 percent of the population, left for Sweden, hoping for a better life. Sweden needed a larger workforce and offered a better standard of living than Finland, which was still recovering from the war. This documentary series tells about Finnish immigrants in Sweden, about adaptation, tolerance and longing for the home country.⁷

The series tells the narrative of migration as originating in trauma and resulting in traumatic experiences, but also as a story of survival: “For many families of the 1970s it was a tremendous change of life to move to Sweden to seek employment. A little shack and a life full of hardships were exchanged for a three-room flat and industrial work.”⁸ As a consequence, the affective economy of this series is very different from that of *Emigranterna*. On the one hand, through individual life stories and private testimonies the series makes visible the history of the Sweden Finns and the mass migration, which for decades has received surprisingly little serious attention in the Finnish public sphere. As such, the series is engaged in identity politics and revision of history books. On the other hand, Sweden Finns are

7 Voice-over introduction to the series, repeated in the beginning of every episode.

8 Voice-over introduction to the series.

invoked for the sake of contemporary political discussions on immigration. Here the affective logic at work is not of a parade of pride, but explicit shaming.

As politics of affect, *Kansankodin kuokkavieraat* performs a double shaming gesture. First and foremost, it attempts to provoke the mainstream Finnish audience – its intended viewers – by redistributing shame to both past and present Finland. In the first episode of the series, many interviewees and first-person narrators use the expression “the fatherland could not take care of its children”, implying that Finland as a state failed its citizens. Even more explicit is the shaming of the contemporary audience: “Shame on you who have denied or forgotten your past!” The intention underlying the series is openly therapeutic: “By dealing with our memories and experiences about a strange country we may be enabled to understand what it feels like to be an immigrant.” The producers hope to promote “health” through shaming therapy.

However, in shaming the nation for its past and present policies, the documentary series also ends up shaming the Sweden Finnish minority – or at least re-ascribing to the migrants the 1960s–1980s Swedish mainstream representations of migrants as social problems. For the Swedish Finn audience, the series is promoted on the Sisuradio home page with a provocative question: “Are Finns who have moved to Sweden economic refugees, immigrants or social bums?”⁹ This formulation by Sweden Finns within their own minority culture would be unthinkable were it expressed by the Swedish majority.

The two documentary series testify to the on-going battle over the meanings of “Sweden Finn”. While addressing their viewers very differently and invoking very different images of the migrant, they nevertheless share the pride/shame dynamic. In *Emigranterna*, the traumas and stigmas of the past are deemphasized for the purpose of contemporary pride narratives, whereas in *Kansankodin kuokkavieraat* the traumas and the legacies of shame are foregrounded.

Rewriting the Past: *Laulu koti-ikävästä*

In 2013, Mika Ronkainen’s third feature documentary, *Laulu koti-ikävästä* (*Ingen riktig finne/Finnish Blood, Swedish Heart*) was released for theatrical distribution both in Finland and Sweden and received positive publicity for voicing memories and feelings of being a Finnish immigrant in Sweden. The film tells the story of Kai Latvalehto, a former Finnish rock musician, who lives in Oulu in Northern Finland and – in the grips of a mid-life crisis, turning forty – embarks with his father on a road trip to his childhood region in southwestern Sweden. As a film about Sweden Finns, albeit repatriated ones, *Laulu koti-ikävästä* is highly conscious of the narrative and affective legacies it builds upon and engages with. In this documentary, the

9 “Suomalaisarja pureutuu ruotsinsuomalaisuuteen”. Sisuradio 17 February 2011. <sverigesradio.se/sida/artikel.aspx?programid=185&artikel=4354422> (visited 2 June 2017).

historical and social facts of fleeing poverty and unemployment in Finland, as well as the child's memories of living in a Finnish immigrant community and being underclass in the eyes of the new homeland, are articulated in and reframed as a feel-good film, a musical documentary and a road movie.

In a Swedish context and for Swedish audiences, the documentary enables a revisiting – both for the mainstream public and for the Swedish Finnish minority – of past negative stereotypes of Swedish Finns, which prevailed in the press during the Great Migration, as disadvantaged citizens in need of social resources. In a Finnish context, the film breaks the stubborn silence on the mass migration which has persisted in the national public sphere. It also rearranges the affective economy dynamic that structures the existing narratives about Swedish Finns with shame as a defining feature. In its narrative, *Laulu koti-ikävästä* stages the visiting of a past trauma as a cure for present unhappiness. While featuring male tears – a popular trope in Finnish culture (Koivunen 2012b) – and inviting viewers into a cathartic viewing experience, the narration distances itself in many ways when processing the legacy of shame.

First, the shame of being an underclass immigrant is displaced into the past and onto a character who in the present is a relatively successful Finn. In fact, this is the structuring joke of the film: the main character is a Finn who longs for Sweden. This is something which is difficult to accommodate in any contemporary narratives about Finland, where hating the obligatory teaching of Swedish language at school is a popular pastime. Kai Latvalehto is neither a Finn nor a Swede, and his memories of childhood hark back to times and places that are excluded from the commonplace Finnish national narrative, as the official histories of Finland seldom highlight the many waves of emigration. Nevertheless, Kai is culturally fluent in both countries, unlike his father who never learnt Swedish and who in the film appears as a kind of happy-go-lucky trickster figure, never seeming to suffer from stigma or shame, but who also finally makes confessions that alter the family history and drastically reframe the narrative of becoming an immigrant. While the father's past is initially cast as a regular story of immigration, fleeing unemployment and seeking a higher standard of living, he discloses that embezzling money from a shop he ran was the motivation for his departure for Sweden. Thus, during their road trip both Kai and his father revisit their respective pasts, which are not the same.

During the road trip, the son returns to places from his childhood, addressing and processing his sense of contemporary non-belonging by embracing his forgotten past. He makes peace and bonds with his father, also learning the real reasons for his family's migration. As a road movie, the generic narrative trajectory is played out and the trip fulfils its task: the son's identity crisis is resolved, the patrilinear relationship is mended and Kai can go on with his life, being a good father to his own son.

Beyond this individual narrative, the film performs collective redistribution and reworking of shame. A key strategy in this regard is the narrative structure of revisiting key sites and landscapes, not only of Kai and his father's past but

those of the Great Migration. Among such *lieux de mémoire* are Slussen, the traffic hub in Stockholm and a notorious scene of Finnish crime and social misery; the landscape of “Million Programme”, the public housing programme of the 1960s and 1970s, which resulted in large suburbs surrounding Stockholm; and scenes of minor industries and roads connecting Stockholm, Eskilstuna and Gothenburg, major areas of Finnish immigration. A second, intertwined strategy is the addition of musical performances staged at these sites.

In the film’s music numbers – released also as a soundtrack – the new generation of Sweden Finnish pop stars revisits the generation of the Great Migration (i.e. that of their parents and grandparents) by performing cover versions of songs produced in 1974 as *Siirtolaisen tie* (“The Migrant’s Way”, Love Records). Shame is redistributed, as the new generation which has the cultural and social capital to perform this gesture inhabits the past landscapes of pain and shame, thereby “converting cultural resources into symbolic capital” (Skeggs 2004, 96). In the imaginary world invoked by music, the perspectives of the past and present intersect and overlap. Anna Järvinen, one of the most well known of the second-generation Swedish pop musicians and singer-songwriters, performs in her signature eerie style the lyrics of Arvo Salo longing for the Finnish language and homeland: “Suomi se on ollut minun äitieni kieli, ja Suomi se on ollut minun maani. Ei voi väittää, ettei sinne vieläkin tee mieli, ja ettei vielä ikäväkin vaali.” (“Finnish was the language of my mothers, and Finland was my country. There is no denying that I still hark back there, and yearning burns my mind.”) Here she writes herself and her generation into the history and narrative of the earlier generation.

While the music in this film may appear enigmatic and detached to some viewers, to those with migrant memories these scenes are textually and affectively thick moments, addressing the viewers both haptically (Marks 2000) and intellectually as readable, multi-layered texts about the actual histories of Sweden Finns. These scenes play a key role in creating a multi-language space for different migrant generations, emotional histories, temporalities and social positions. Furthermore, in and through music numbers there emerges “an empire of Sweden Finns” as an intimate public, in line with Lauren Berlant’s (2008, viii) idea of “a community of feeling” founded not on the mode of confessional speech but shared social memory and mutual recognition. The second- and third-generation Sweden Finns seem to be saying to their parents and grandparents: “You existed. We see you. You see us. We know and will not forget.”

While mobilizing the affective legacies of shame – returning to the iconic sites of Sweden Finnish working-class life and revisiting the songs of the 1970s – the film also mobilizes shame to build an imaginary community of Sweden Finns across generations with second- and third-generation Sweden Finns sharing the histories of the Great Migration. In the montage of the film, the Sweden Finns of the past and those of today are edited into a sequence, emerging as a community that shares a common history. If not all have personal injuries or wounds, in any case they share the gaze of others, the experience of being read by others as a “Sweden

Finn”. In this imaginary, utopian world of togetherness, belonging and authenticity – to cite the characteristics that Richard Dyer (1977) ascribes to musicals as a genre of utopia – politics in the sense of societal structures, fighting injustices and discrimination and claiming rights are momentarily put aside.

Another important accent is introduced by Darya Pakarinen, a tango star who sings about Finnish children as having equally blue eyes as Swedish ones (“Suomen lapsi on yhtä kultahapsi, ja yhtä sinisilmäinen kuin Ruotsin lapsi on”). In her performance, Pakarinen makes visible the context of Finnish immigration. While existing narratives of Finnish immigration to Sweden tend to treat it as an isolated phenomenon and part of a national narrative – namely, Finns fleeing the unemployment and poverty of their home country to Sweden – Pakarinen, the daughter of a Finnish mother and Iranian father, embodies and makes visible the transnational context of immigration: Finns participating together with other immigrants in the labour force during the economic growth and expanding industrialization of Sweden.

As a narrative about Sweden Finns, *Laulu koti-ikävästä* mobilizes a range of genres and modes of narration: autoethnographic documentary, historical documentary, male melodrama, road movie and musical. The film’s attempt to speak to both mainstream and minority audiences in both Finland and Sweden adds to the complexity of its address and its politics of affect.

Conclusion

While rooted in social histories of the mass migration in the 1960s and 1970s, the centrality of shame in narratives about Sweden Finns is not reducible to an index of social and historical trauma. Beyond a negative emotion or a toxic part of identity, shame – and its rejoinder, pride – operates as a pattern in process, structuring identity construction and community building. Shame signals an affective practice engendering cultural citizenship; making visible and invoking for many viewers deeply felt, painful memories of an injurious past, narratives of shame also serve as a cultural resource, an entrance ticket to a wider market of identity narratives and pride politics in the public sphere.

While not proposed as a distinctive Sweden Finnish structure of feeling, the dynamic of pride and shame permeates the new narratives about Sweden Finns. The novels, television programmes and the feature documentary discussed in this chapter demonstrate how the pride/shame dynamic operates as an economy in the sense of emotions circulating, enforcing one another and adding to the affective value through repetition in time. In the case of *Svinalångorna* and *Ingenbarnsland*, the first-person narrators articulate experiences of being shamed and incorporating shame into one’s identity. At the same time, the novels have been read as politics of pride and visibility by appreciating Swedish audiences. The two public service television series *Emigranterna* and *Kansankodin kuokkavieraat* highlight how

media institutions articulate citizenship as affective practice and how economies of pride and shame propel national narratives. While *Emigranterna*, as a narrative of mobility, reads as an attempt to inscribe added value to migrating bodies and selves, *Kansankodin kuokkavieraat* reinscribes valuable contemporary selves onto the injurious past, framing the trope of Sweden Finns with legacies of poverty and social disadvantage. Politics of visibility as an affirmative strategy thus operate both with empowerment and shaming. *Laulu koti-ikävästä* features confessional, “authentic” Sweden Finnish voices who testify to past injury, embodying shame, but the film offers a reparative, therapeutic trip: an imaginary return to the past that resolves generational conflicts, resulting in a healing union.

In these cases, the economy of pride and shame is intimately linked with class histories. Narratives about Sweden Finns read as stories about the pain of being an outsider and an underdog, illiterate and ineloquent in Swedish, even when they are produced by younger generations who themselves embody success stories of immigration. Following the affective dynamic, they are also stories about overcoming social stigmas and traumatic migrant histories and about coming to terms with the past. Indeed, as Beverley Skeggs argues, identities are not to be seen as “reflections of objective class positions” or as “essential categories”, but as “continually in the process of being reproduced as responses to social positions, through access to representational systems and in the conversion of forms of capital” (Skeggs 1997, 94).

Laulu koti-ikävästä indicates how the economy of pride and shame entails both repetition and symbolic re-evaluation. Sharing the history of representations and its symbolic violence with their parents and grandparents who emigrated to Sweden, the second- and third-generation Sweden Finns have access to what Beverley Skeggs calls “conversion mechanisms”. Unlike the older generations, they possess cultural and social resources which enable a resignification of classed histories and a re-evaluation of Sweden Finnishness as symbolic capital. Paradoxically, therefore, shame may operate simultaneously as a stigma and as an identity resource for the new Sweden Finnish self.

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